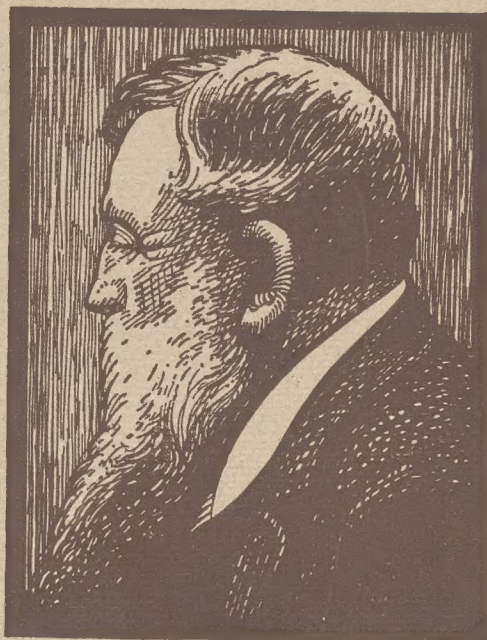


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## AUGUSTE RODIN



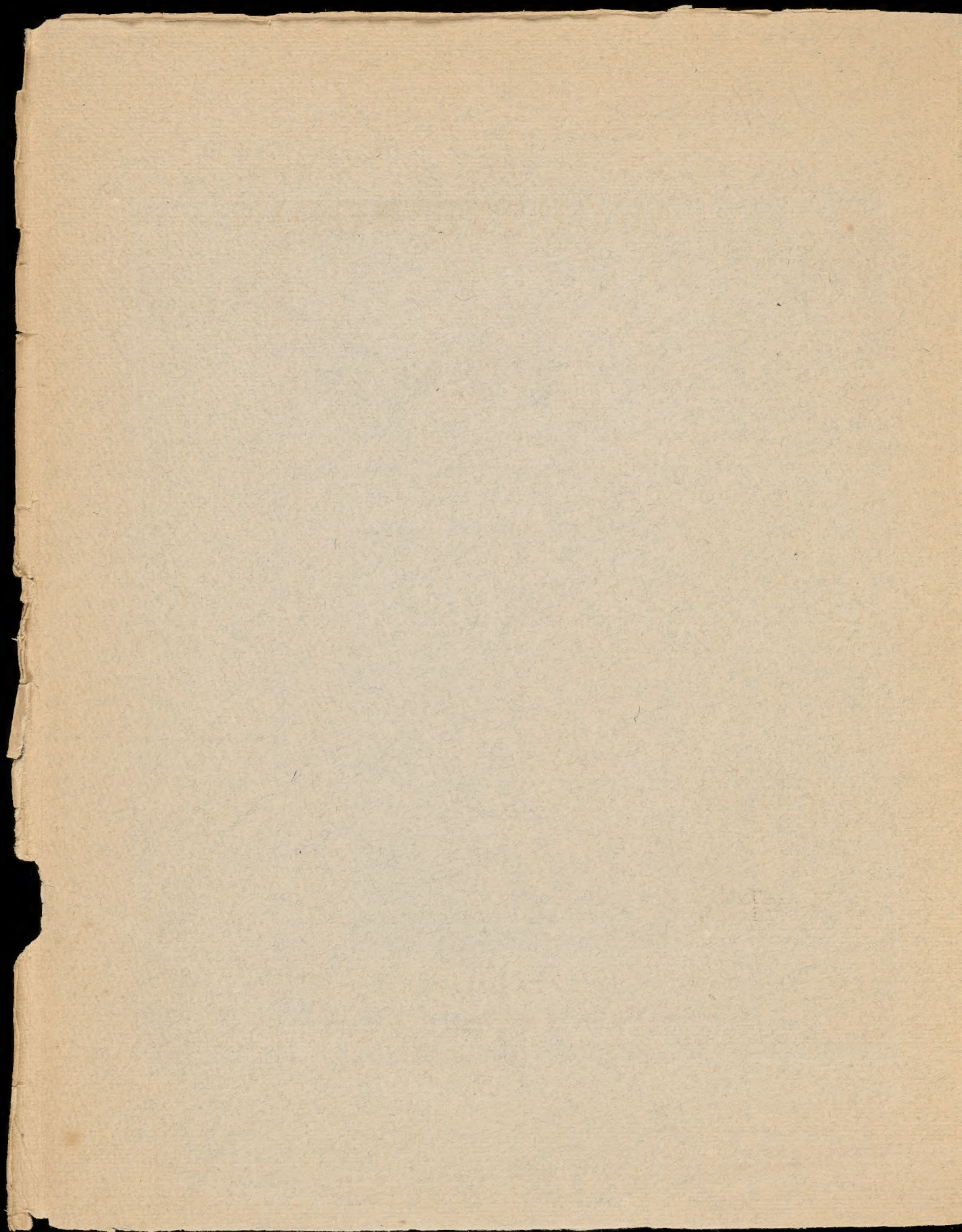
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LONDON  
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T. FISHER UNWIN

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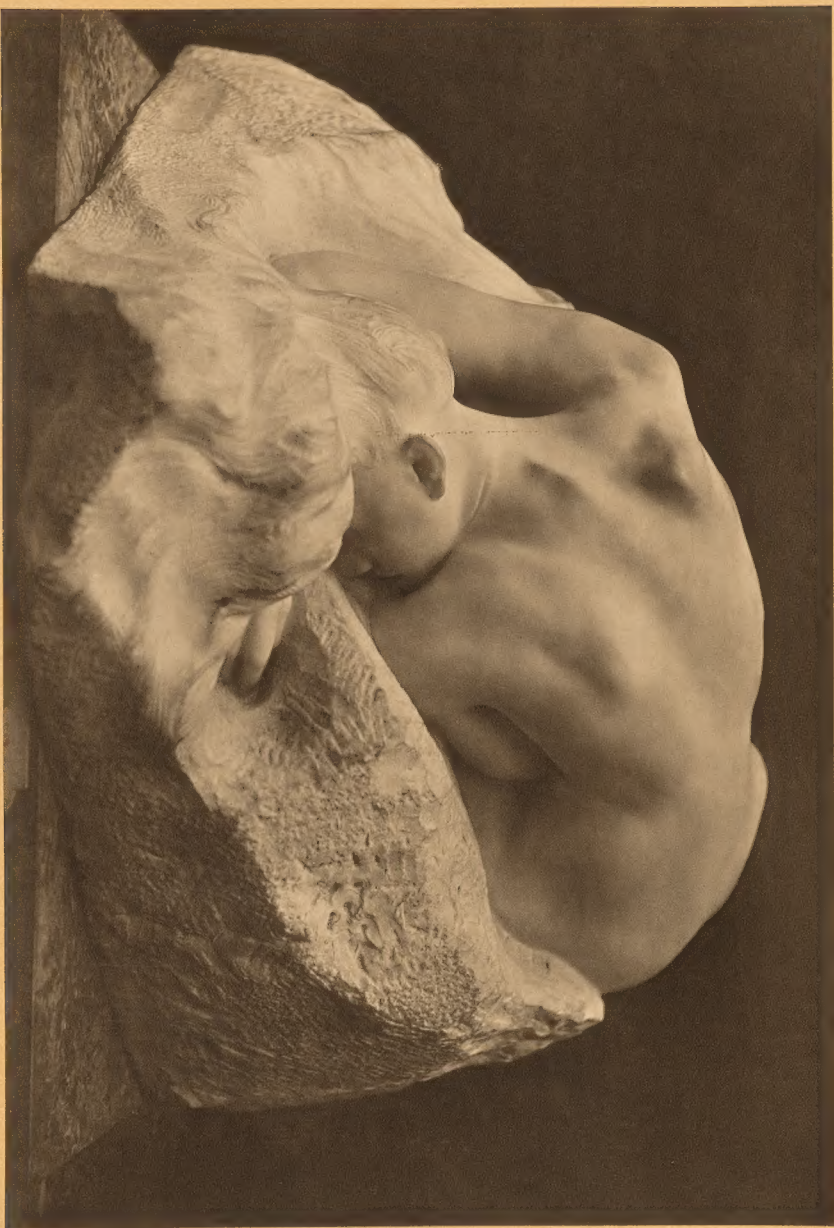


AUGUSTE RODIN









Auguste Rodin

*Danaë*

*Danaë*

*Danaë*



AUGUSTE RODIN  
BY GUSTAVE KAHN

FIFTY-FOUR TINTED ILLUSTRATIONS AND TWO ENGRAVINGS



T. FISHER UNWIN  
LONDON LEIPSIC  
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In the year 1900 a special building outside of and independent of the Paris Exhibition itself was filled with a complete collection of Auguste Rodin's finest works, not including those of his statues that adorn public places, gardens and galleries. A magnificent show, it attracted thousands of visitors whose astonishment was great that a man capable of evoking so splendid a past and so robust a present, should be entirely relegated to an outhouse and be practically unrepresented within the official enclosure. The authorities, indeed, while issuing their multiplicity of orders, for the decoration of countless pavilions, palaces and gates, totally neglected to invite the smallest contribution from the man whom they alone (together with a few members of the Institute and other individuals sunk in the slough of routine) failed to consider the greatest of our living sculptors. All Frenchmen who keep themselves at all informed as to the movements of modern art, all artists and critics worthy of the name agree in this estimate of Rodin, and some would consider even this praise faint indeed. I heard Jules Chéret, for instance, lately declare that "Rodin was more than a sculptor, he was the Rembrandt of sculptors". It is none the less true, that Rodin, covered as he was with glory, and admired by all the élite, was turned away from the gates of that Paradise, the Paris Exhibition, by angels in the uniform of the Institute, brandishing their puny academic swords, and that our greatest sculptor held his own exhibition privately and independently of the State.

□   □  
□

Whence comes this ostracism?—an intermittent ostracism be it said—for Rodin, though he has not received his due, has nevertheless occasionally triumphed over the ill feeling of his fellows and over the timidity of those in authority. Whence comes it that this hostility has made itself felt amongst official artists and critics at each fresh one of his great undertakings, at the time of his first appearance in public and at the successive exhibitions of the Gate of Hell and of the statues of Balzac and the Thinker? How comes it that he attained the singular

honour which fell also to the lot of Carpeaux, whose group "La Danse" in front of the Opéra was covered with ink by some unknown idiot? Whence comes this frenzy which leads people to destroy his plaster casts, as actually occurred with that of the Thinker, before the magnificent bronze was placed near the Pantheon? It comes from the fact that Rodin is an innovator, a calm and forceful innovator, all the more terrible to those who know only the petty and technical side of sculpture, in that he does not pour himself in manifestoes, abroad, but quietly shoulders aside convention, by his uninterrupted production of masterpieces. His neighbourhood in a Salon is terrible; his sculpture makes everything placed beside it look cold and tame. Is this not enough to account for the most furious hatred?

□   □   □

When Rodin held his exhibition thus alone in 1900, some of his artist friends (and those not the least important) determined to show their admiration and friendship in the form of preface to the catalogue, which was drawn up by Arsène Alexandre and published on the same occasion. All painters are not masters of style, and for this reason, Claude Monet, our wonderful landscape painter, confined himself to the simple expression of the great esteem in which he held Rodin. Jean Paul Laurens, the finest painter—the only painter I may say, in the Institute—writes soberly this noble eulogy: "Rodin is of the kin of those who walk alone." Carrière and Besnard with their greater facility for writing gave their opinions in the preface to the catalogue with greater detail, and their words are of indubitable interest, for none can speak so well, so justly, so clearly of a great artist as other eminent artists who understand and admire him. Let us listen to Carrière:

"Rodin's art comes from the earth and to the earth it returns, like those gigantic blocks,—stones or dolmens that accentuate the solitude of desert places and in whose heroic vastness man recognises his own image. Passion, whose obedient servant Rodin is, has revealed to him the laws of expression, has given him the sense of volumes and of proportions and has taught him to choose the forms that shall be expres-





PORTRAIT DE L'ARTISTE

BILDNIS DES KÜNSTLERS

THE ARTIST'S PICTURE



LE PENSEUR

DER DENKER

THINKER



CELLE QUI FUT HEAULMÈRE

VERWELKTE SCHÖNHEIT

WITHERED BEAUTY



sive....." "Thus the earth projects her outward forms, images and statues which fill us with the sense of inward life..... Trees and plants have their analogy with the beauty of young womanhood; slender columns of smooth limbs rise towards the supple bust and swelling breasts over which droops the heavy burden of the hair on the strong, little neck. So we see a fine and juicy fruit weighing down the branch that bears it. Rodin's generalising mind has made solitude a necessity to him. He has not been able to collaborate at the missing cathedral, but his desire for humanity binds him to the eternal forms of nature."

Thus we see that Carrière, the touching and profound painter of the sacred intimacies of life, the tender interpreter of familiar human things, is above all struck by Rodin's power. If he compares him to the creators of the ancient buildings, of early days, if he likens his works to the dolmens and carved stones of primitive man, it is because he is struck on the one hand by Rodin's absolute obedience to nature, and on the other by that gift for simplification so remarkable in the artists of olden times. Carrière notes with the greatest care and a very happy precision Rodin's manner of deciphering nature's alphabet, of seizing the relationship of forms, the resemblance between organic and inorganic matter, and the similarities of line that connect man and tree. When Carrière says that Rodin has not been able to collaborate at the missing cathedral, he alludes to the fundamental desire which is at the base of Rodin's theory of aesthetics, and to which we shall revert later on—the desire of integralising plastic art. Carrière concludes rightly by saying that in his contemporaries' eyes Rodin appears an essential force and one of the intelligences that has reflected with the greatest power and cohesion that manifold spectacle and infinite variety of a few great themes which we call life.

After Carrière, profound and restraint, let us listen to Besnard, who, by the magic of his colour and by his power of capturing and fixing the iridescence of the world, is Carrière's very antithesis. His admiration, however, is great. "As I look at Rodin's work", he writes, "I imagine that his brain, like every great artist's, contains the complete idea of the world with all its forms and symbols in their infinite

complexity, whence springs the loftiest synthetic power. It is no doubt the passionate contemplation of nature which has led him to feel that outside of nature's self no other form can suggest her proper symbol. .... Hence Rodin's love for each individual fragment of life which enabled him to express life itself and to fix the evanescent trace of the passions, by extracting out of form its idea, all ideas, I may say, and the very meaning of humanity. .... Form, as Rodin understands it, becomes life. .... First he makes men and then he animates them; nay, rather, they are alive from the very moment they are completed. .... He is the contrary of those artists who think that by choosing a grandiloquent subject they can make a great work, never perceiving that by missing the human side they are condemned to oblivion, for succeeding generations take into account only those works which breathe the fullest humanity. For this reason Greek art is immortal and will for ever point out the way to those who desire that art shall be great. How should we be able to conceive the pagan world without Grecian sculpture? Who would remember poor Jupiter if it were not for Phidias the divine? .... Rodin's statues would almost make us believe that we are in an epoch of great artistic development. .... Carried to these heights his wild spirit becomes serenity. Supreme pinnacle of art, summits that are irradiated by the fire of genius, and freshened by the pure breath of Thought."

□   □   □

#### RODIN AT HOME.

Since the year 1900 when Rodin's art was made manifest with a richness and completeness unrivalled by any other sculptor, his vigour and glory have gone on increasing. At the present moment, although the Institute's hostility has been only partially overcome, and although (in spite of ostensible recognition) he is still the victim of petty spite, yet his success in Paris and his triumphs abroad have brought him the maximum of glory that is possible for a real and conscientious artist to obtain during his life time.





ETUDE POUR LE BALZAC  
STUDIE FÜR DEN BALZAC  
STUDY FOR THE BALZAC



FRANCESCA DE RIMINI



LA CHUTE D'ICARE

DER STURZ DES IKARUS

ICAR'S FALL



LA CENTAURESSE

DIE CENTAURIN

THE CENTAURESS



LA CENTAURESSE

DIE CENTAURIN

THE CENTAURESS

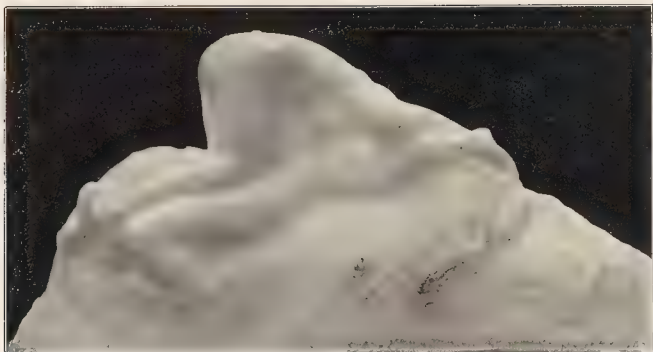




MONUMENT VICTOR HUGO

DENKMAL VICTOR HUGOS

MONUMENT OF VICTOR HUGO



L'EMPRISE

DIE UMARMUNG

THE EMBRACE



LA PENSÉE

DER GEDANKE

THOUGHT



Rodin lived for many years in Paris, in the distant quarter of Vaugirard, dear to artists and especially to sculptors, because they are there able to find at less expense the vast studios necessitated by their art, and because this suburb, solitary as it is by day, and populous by night, has a special and curious charm. Finding that he had not enough space in the studio granted him by the state at the "Dépôt des marbres" Rodin had the white pavilion he had used at the Exhibition, removed to Meudon-Val-Fleury, a place which has thus turned into an object of pilgrimage for lovers of beauty.



Rodin's house overlooks an elbow of the Seine as it passes between the hills of Meudon and Issy. A high railway embankment runs along the valley which is spanned by a viaduct. A few tall and scanty trees surround the little villas which are beginning to spring up in this once inauspicious spot. Where Rodin first settled there was a waste place on the road between Issy and Meudon, one of the points of transition between the suburb of factories and workshops and the suburb of residential houses. Now, the little pot-houses which used to dot the road are no longer to be seen, from every clump of trees arises a little spire or the glistening slate of new roofs. Rodin has brought life to the neighbourhood. There is a fine and exclusive view from his house; on the one side the chequered buildings of Paris encroach upon the wooded slopes of the Bois de Boulogne; on the other, lies the village of Meudon, sparsely scattered amid its grounds, and the captive balloons of the park of aerostation quaintly floating in the air.

In front, the river flows quiet and silent; while often the rolling of the train over the viaduct interrupts with its noisy and smoky clatter the quiet of one of the stillest spots in the neighbourhood of Paris.

This landscape is visible from every part of Rodin's house, from his studio and from his garden, where a little pool of water has been contrived for the benefit of a few lazy swans. A little path, a short-cut to the station, runs alongside the house. This is the road Rodin takes when he goes up to Paris, to his studio Rue de l'Université, al-

ways wearing a top-hat and quietly and correctly dressed. And along this path come his visitors, after a quarter of an hour's walk, from the station. Rodin's house is nearer to Issy than to Meudon, but in order to avoid a rather up-hill and often muddy road it is better to go to the latter station. It is easy for new-comers to find the way. Everybody in the neighbourhood knows Rodin's house. The railway-officials, every time they see a new face, are prepared to pointing out. Not the smallest stationer's or tobacconist's or café but sells picture post-cards of it.

The Exhibition pavilion or Sculpture Gallery is what one sees best from the railway line and what gives Rodin's house its noble lines and its character of severe elegance. It dwarfs its surroundings, for Rodin is no builder. A simple dwelling-house, one or two old cottages, which he has turned into studios, by removing their partition walls, and finally his gallery—these buildings form his whole installation; long grass grown alleys lead up to them; one or two white marble basins are surrounded by beds of flowers, and a little vine has just been added.

□   ■   □

The porch of the Gallery is thronged with statues, not Rodin's however, but fine fragments of antique sculpture. You are welcomed by goddesses, by athletes, by the grave gesture of a Pythoness or an Apollo. The general effect of their deep warm tones contrasts with the snowy whiteness of Rodin's plaster casts or marbles in the Gallery beyond, of which one gets a glimpse through the spacious bay-windows. The man who thinks Greek art supreme in its beauty and yet places some of its most magnificent specimens at the entrance of his own works, shows that he does not fear comparison. He seems calmly to accept the judgment of men and recognise with confidence and knowledge his own worth. We seem to hear some self-complacent and backboneless sculptor of the Institute murmur that such conduct lacks modesty. But Rodin is not modest, or rather his modesty is not a species of underhand vanity. There is no need for him to be modest. He has striven too much; he has compared himself too often with his





ETUDE POUR LE BALZAC  
STUDIE FÜR DEN BALZAC  
STUDY FOR THE BALZAC



ETUDE POUR LE BALZAC  
STUDIE FÜR DEN BALZAC  
STUDY FOR THE BALZAC



BOURGEOIS DE CALAIS

BÜRGER VON CALAIS

CITIZENS OF CALAIS



LE PREMIER DÉPART

ERSTE TRENNUNG

FIRST PARTING



ESQUISSE DE BALZAC

SKIZZE ZUM BALZAC

SKETCH FOR THE BALZAC



neighbours. And, moreover, the tenacity of his struggle, the mastery with which he has arrived at the highest summit of his art and acquired such intuition and such complete possession of the language of human form, have freed him from all timidity and all false shame. He knows that his sculpture has attained the limit of possible suggestion and precision, and that for long no one has treated the nude with more conscience, skill and inspiration.

He places at his threshold works which serve as a criterion for his own and he has sufficient pride to choose first-rate ones. And in the same way we see inside his house, a little marvel of antique sculpture placed beside the head of his Balzac or beside the fierce evocation of an enraged peasant woman, and no one can say that there is any discordance in this juxtaposition of ancient and modern master-pieces.

" " "

#### RODIN'S TWO MANNERS.

Rodin was born in 1840. His biography, like that of all artists who have made the pursuit of an artistic ideal the single aim of life, is perfectly simple and offers no more striking events, than the date of an exhibition, the production of a work or the modification of a manner.

He began as a pupil of Barye's who, with Carpeaux, was the greatest sculptor of the preceding generation. Rodin, however, attended his classes very rarely. A great animal sculptor, Barye does not seem to have been remarkable as a teacher; and for artists of the stamp of Rodin a close study of nature is more profitable than any master however excellent. After leaving Barye, Rodin worked with Carrier-Belleuse; but though the first work that Rodin exhibited in the Salon, "The Man with the Broken Nose", is set down in the catalogue (according to the old custom) as by a pupil of Barye's and Carrier-Belleuse's, yet he was not so much a pupil as a workman of the latter's. He worked six years for Carrier Belleuse, whose light and easy talent was at that time enjoying great success in Paris; as a matter of fact, Rodin perhaps did a little more than merely put his master's works into marble, but for the most part his labours were mechanical and did not admit of his own personality

coming to the face. Practically, his only master (and he was not really a master) was Lecocq de Boisbaudran, whose system consisted chiefly in leaving his pupils to develop according to their own capabilities and was thus a useful check upon academical instruction.

On leaving Carrier-Belleuse Rodin went to assist a Belgian artist, Van Rasbourg who was being employed to decorate the Brussels' Bourse. Some of Rodin's work is in the façade of this lugubrious edifice which is an imitation of the Paris Bourse on a smaller scale. But this also was for the most part mechanical work. For a short time Rodin was attached to the manufactory at Sèvres, and though at that time the authorities were far from enterprising in the matter of art and Rodin was certainly entirely out of sympathy with the staff, yet there are certain pieces of Sèvres which bear his sign manual. "The Sèvres Gallery", says Roger Marx, "takes pride in a special kind of pottery which is decorated by a process resembling intaglio; of this kind is the Pompeian Vase, on which Rodin has engraved in the white and friable ware, an allegory of "Winter" with a magnificent frieze of figures and ornaments. These compositions exist in reality of drawings in very low relief, so low indeed that it is subordinate to the strongly marked outline." Roger Marx in his essay on Rodin also points out that some of his earlier works were paintings—a portrait of the artist's father, copies of pictures in the Antwerp gallery and a few landscapes and nude studies. There exist also a certain number of drawings of his earliest exhibited statues done by him for reproduction in the review of *l'Art* and in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, drawings which equal in mastery those of his later years.

This period of his life which he spent in Belgium, harnessed to work in which he could not develop his personality was nevertheless productive of much. He often says himself when his recollections go back to these years of slow formation, that his stay in Flanders was useful.

Rodin, however, would have developed as well, had the time of his incubation been spent decorating a building in Marseilles or in London.

The power that is in him comes from his inmost being and not from his surroundings. If he has points in common with Rembrandt,





LA SPHYNOE



L'APPEL AUX ARMES

AUFRUUF ZU DEN WAFEN

CALLING TO ARMS



MONUMENT VICTOR HUGO

DENKMAL VICTOR HUGOS

MONUMENT OF VICTOR HUGO

he has some also with Puget, but doubtless his latent inclination towards the study of light received nurture and sustenance under the chill and rapidly changing skies of Flanders, so kin to the beautiful and fugitive iridescence of Holland.

The great North Sea is reflected in the pallor of the sky that bends over the vast plains of Flanders, sea mists and colourings tinge the mornings of Brabant. Like a mantle inwrought with a myriad shades of grey and black, the fine, soft rain is blown by the fierce winds right across the lands; and above the Flemish gables are piled huge masses of cloud in which the sculptor could study weird fantasies of form, strange and gigantic images built up by the caprice of chance or by the unknow laws that govern the winds and clouds. The buildings of these countries are different in colour from those elsewhere. The open air statues are differently enveloped; on the roof and on the façades their slender silhouettes, old gold or fine bronze in colour stand out against the pearly, tender tones of the atmosphere. Rodin, with his painter's eye, saw the modelling of these statues vary with the changing light. And these observations were useful to him if not essential, for they added to his other studies the experience of reality. Or we may rather say that he made use of these sensations later on, for his early manner, the bent of his first efforts is towards life, towards fullness and completeness of movement.

All great sculptors sought to render life, but not all have sought it in the same manner. Some have aimed rather at serenity than at truth of expression; Michael Angelo was great, powerful and severe; the genius of others, like that of Carpeaux, lies rather in the direction of elegance. Rude's and Rodin's greatness is that of pathos. But Rodin has more than pathos. French sculpture, which, with that of the Italian Renaissance, is the finest in existence (without counting antiquity), had suffered a diminution at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, before the coming of Rodin. The reason of this is that David's influence was even stronger over sculpture than over painting. It was owing to him that sculptors in the name of drawing, pure academic drawing, turned rather to Ingres, than to the sculptors of antiquity. Ingres' importance will be



seen by the following fact. The sculptor Etex who, though now considered less than mediocre, was at that time entrusted with the decoration of buildings in company with Rude, and even in preference to him, carved in stone Ingres' Apotheosis of Homer—a tribute, if ever there was, one to repose of drawing and monotony of line. Now the chief beauties of French sculpture are to be found in the works of the Gothic carvers which, whether tortured or simple, grotesque or violent, are always the expression of an ardent faith. They are to be found again in the vehement contorsions of Puget and in the powerful modelling of his colossal figures; they may be found also in the restrained and dignified grace of Houdon, in the noble elegance of Pigalle and in the charming abandon of Clodion. David's style froze and transformed all this grace and strength into academic posturing. I do not mean by this that between Clodion and Rodin there is no one that counts but David d'Angers, Barye and Carpeaux. But without contesting the superiority of Cartellier, Milhomme and Jaley, without underrating Priault's spirit and fancy, Clésinger's attempts at colour and Pradier's somewhat bourgeois gracefulness, without forgetting Duret, or Dattau's witty modellings in clay, one may say that the great representatives of sculpture are Rude, David d'Angers—because of his understanding of the romantic movement, and his literary as well as technical qualities—and next to them Barye and Carpeaux. These are eminent among the others as Rodin is eminent among the honourable artists of his time such as Guillaume and Paul Dubois.

They represent the true tendency of sculpture which is towards movement, and fall into the general tradition from the times of the Greeks and the Gothics. While, however, there is no definite link between Barye and Rodin, there is one between Carpeaux and Rodin.

Carpeaux is a romantic in his Ugolino, but he especially derives from the good sculptors of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. After them he was the first to call forth flowers of stone on the façades of great buildings. His *Flora* and his *Dance* are smiles of beauty turned immortal. We can still remember the objections, the attacks, the furious hostility he provoked. He was hated because his sculpture is not the sculpture of repose, but rather the essence of motion—it runs, it dances, it is in-



DESESPAIR

VERZWEIFLUNG

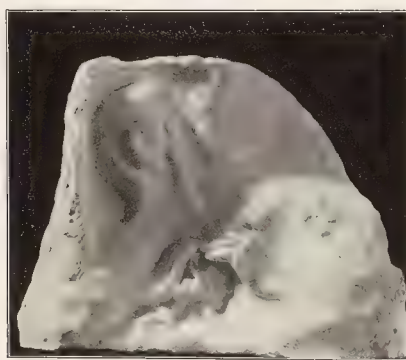
DESPAIR



LE PRINTEMPS

FRÜHLING

SPRING



MONUMENT ROLLINAT •  
DENKMAL ROLLINATS •  
ROLLINAT'S MONUMENT



stinct with movement. Carpeaux added to the domain of sculpture a province which seemed to his fellow-sculptors to belong rather to painting. They dreaded a gain which increased the material difficulties of their art and clung to the easier conventions of regularity and of repose, which become half mechanical formulae in groups such as Cavalier's Gracchi and Crauk's Victories. But truth was stronger than they, Sculpture consists in movement as well as in form. Rodin's first works had movement as their aim, ideal and guide. He aroused therefore the hatred of all partisans of the studio pose, of pompous and theatrical gesture turned into stone.

His first exhibit, "The Man with the Broken Nose", showed clearly that the new sculptor did not bow before the academic definition of beauty and that he was attracted above all by individuality. The Man with the Broken Nose was exhibited just at the time when Impressionism was sending a thrill of hatred through the ranks of respectability. His "St. John the Baptist" which followed horrified them still more, for the figure is represented as walking and according to the aesthetic creed of the Institute he should have been blessing or baptising or preaching. But Rodin's "St. John" announces the good tidings with a grave and simple gesture as he walks along.

Contrary to academic optics which only give the details of the human body on the side to which the sculptor wishes to draw attention, every aspect of the St. John is worked with equal care. The very correctness of the modelling was the cause of a spiteful attack on Rodin; his enemies declared that the statue had been made from a cast of a human body.

Mr. Léon Maillard in his study on Rodin has enumerated very judiciously the reasons which should have prevented this ridiculous accusation, the chief being, that it is materially impossible to take a cast which shall reproduce in its entirety the exact proportions of the whole body. But envy and malice do not choose their weapons. Notwithstanding the unlikelihood of the accusation Rodin demanded an enquiry and his enemies were obliged to give way before the series of preliminary studies which he was able to bring forward.

Rodin indeed is in the habit of accumulating these preliminary studies of detail; the glass cases in his studio are filled with studies of portions of the human frame, such as torsos, hands, etc. He passionately delights in the expressions of the human hand. He has made hands that writhe as though they would seize the empty air, grasp and knead it like a malicious snowball to fling at the unconscious passer-by; he has made terrible hands, one in especial, violent, furrowed, and tentacular, which seems like to crawl like a maimed and bleeding beast against its invisible enemy; he has made greedy hands, crushed by the weight of destiny, gambler's hands crab like and rapacious for the skirts of chance. At one moment of his life he gave them special importance, but only at one moment, for Rodin's art is above all things harmonious, and he advances with an even step, omitting no detail in his slow and sure progress towards perfection.

The works of his first period are the "St. John", the "Man of the Age of Brass"—who seems to be coming out of the cavern of mankind (as Resny would say) and stretching himself, shaking off the heavy sleep of savagedom and awaking to the long day of hunting and dreaming, of fighting with wild beasts and basking in the smile of nature; then comes the "Kiss" that poem in white marble, which expresses the yielding of the Beloved to the protecting and almost fearful arms of her Lover, in that transient moment of tenderness which comes before the storm of passion? and the "Thought", a white head, gentle, demure and pensive; a charming group of "Brother and Sister" tender and candid; the violent "Call to Arms"; the graceful figures of "Spring"; "Eve", trembling and despairing, conscious of her nakedness, the prey at once of shame and desire, the "Fauness", the "Sarmiente", a monument on the base of which "Apollo's triumph over the Hydra" seems to be struck out of the stone in a flash of luminous brightness as radiant as the Sun god's gesture is heroic; the helmeted "Bellona" of the Lyons gallery; "Wind", a woman's head, harmonious in spite of its fury; and stamped with demented violence; the "Burghers of Calais"; the "Monument of Claude Lorrain"; the "Fair Helmet-Maker"; and the "Gate of Hell" which is still unfinished.



NIOBE





L'AME DU SCULPTEUR (ETUDE)  
DES BILDHAUERS SEELE .....  
THE SCULPTOR'S SOUL .....



JEUNE HOMME ET JEUNE FEMME  
JÜNGLING UND JUNGFAU.....  
YOUNG MAN AND WOMAN.....



ENFANT ET JEUNE FILLE

KIND UND JUNGES MÄDCHEN

CHILD AND YOUNG GIRL

Grouped about these principal works are a quantity of minor ones which are in reality great sculpture and contribute also to his glory, for these little groups and statuettes though small in actual size need only material execution to give them monumental proportions. Amongst them are many which combine violence and grace. Rodin has in him much of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the proportions of these statuettes are sometimes those of Tanagra, but even when he is most delicate he is also powerful. Among such groups we have the "Rape" (*L'Enlèvement*) in which a man is catching up in his arms a woman who by a marvellous piece of fore-shortening seems to be actually shrinking into herself; „Possession" (*L'Emprise*) in which the man is violently flinging himself on the woman; clusters of Bacchantes who by the fury of their contortions recall the *Femmes Damnées* of the great Baudelaire whose *Fleurs du Mal* Rodin (a fervent Baudelarian) once illustrated for the collector Mr. Paul Gallimard in a new priceless volume. In another work we have represented the heavy sleep of a woman exhausted by the caresses of a satyr; then we have Niobe, a Caryatid bearing on her shoulder the huge burden of human suffering; a satyr rushing on a woman, and the calm and bewitching joy of womanhood when the vanquisher humbles himself at her feet; a gentle Eve confronting a violent Fauness, both the innocent and the evil one depicted with equal mastery. Icarus is shown us fallen from Heaven, and his head dashing against the earth in a frenzied movement which yet is as simple as it is just; and again in another work the impetuosity of Rodin's power shows us a woman of prey bearing off in a triumph of joy—like a hunter his game—the youth of her desire flung across her shoulder. Rodin's satyrs and fauns, unlike the dainty and gallant monsters of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, are inspired with a breath of fury which seems to urge them forward in mad pursuit of the coveted moment. It is about this period of Rodin's art that Roger Marx writes, "Fatality seems to dog his couples; they pursue and attract and embrace each other, but even after their embraces they still keep the bitterness of unsatisfied desire". Rodin often reminds us of Baudelaire, who was the great poet of his early days.

True, he does not follow him in his dream of beauty in repose—

"I hate the movement that disturbs line"—the theory indeed was a superficial one—but was his disciple in that study of profound and unsatisfied passion, that deep rooted desire which still remains unquenched when weary heart and exhausted body beg for peace from the tyrant mind that drives them on to frenzies ever new and ever the same. Rops was also influenced by Baudelaire and Rops, too, is a great painter of sensual passion, but the difference which lies at the root of the art of Rodin and of Rops, is, that Rops' observation is always satirical and Rodin's never. Rops studies the violent and enamoured couples of great cities; Rodin goes to the sacred wood and listens to the swift gallop of the Centaurs as they whinny to their loves; his version is of the myriad births of nature in the clasp of the mighty Pan. He is a pagan, a fire, with all the glory of love which he knows to be the same thing as beauty, and knowing that the creation of love and the creation of beauty are one, he endeavours to express love with magnificent intensity. This is the novelty of his art. How does he obtain this intensity? we ask. By describing the governing impulse of the beings he represents in its most characteristic and essential moment, and in subordinating everything to impulse and movement.

During one whole period he devoted himself to expressing different aspects of love—its joy, its grief, its madness,—nay, more, he has given us its very soul and type and quintessence. And it is not love alone, not a mere sexual instinct that he translates, but a vital one. One of Rodin's embracing couples makes us think not only of the moment of passion, but also of the joy of all created flesh, of the sensual joy that stirs in the heart of all things. Rodin gives one the impression that his creatures, even in the moment in which they are kindled by the radiance of the kiss, remember that they are a fugitive note struck in the eternal chant of passion and pleasure which is the essential condition of human existence. As the earth revolves on its axis, and clothes itself in the beauty of harvest and the glory of flowers, in like manner springs up the greater glory of their love.

With this understanding of passion, Rodin could not fail to find in the agony of the body which can no longer minister to the longing for





*Le Baiser*

*Der Kuß*

*The Kiss*



love, a magnificent symbol analogous to Victor Hugo's Ruy Gomez or Boaz. His is greater and almost terrible in its pathetic interpretation of human decrepitude.

It is inspired by Villon's celebrated poem upon "Her who was the Fair Helmet Maker"—the beautiful prostitute who once drew the eyes of so many youths towards her, who stirred the hearts and drained the purses of so many simple scholars and fat burghers. Here we see her with her profile, which is still touching in its purity of line, her shrunken arms, her hollowed chest, her fallen breasts, her poor pitiful back and the intense despondence of her attitude. Sculpture, whether it be that of the ancients, or of Rodin's self, is an art of supreme suggestion, and can evoke tragedy from the curve of a muscle or the posture of a body, and Rodin's chisel in hollowing the wrinkles of a neck, the ravaged bosom and wasted limbs, has brought before us all the poetry of old age and weariness and fear and death. This work is as powerful as the bas-relief in which Germain Pilon placed in terrible juxtaposition on the same tomb the lovely and serene image of the living woman beside the fearful effigy of the dead. Rodin's statue is perhaps all the finer for not having sought a dramatic contrast, thus giving us without emphasis or exaggeration an elegiac rendering of the terrible drama of decrepitude.

Though not one of the most celebrated of his works "The Fair Helmet-Maker" is not one of the least important. "The Burghers of Calais" however are more multiform and more varied.

" " "

#### THE BURGHERS OF CALAIS, CLAUDE LORRAIN ETC.

Rodin has not always been able to get his public statues placed as he desired; artists' wishes are in this respect seldom attended to. He would have liked his Burghers to be placed almost on a level with the ground, beside the sea, just as they were in real life when they went to Edward's III. camp. Or else he would have had them put on a very high, perfectly plain masonry column, as though raised aloft in the atmosphere of legend.



A middle course has however been followed and his group has been placed on a moderately high pedestal, in a square opposite a station. When Rodin first produced it, this procession in bronze was something absolutely new. He worked at it with passion in order to reply to a charge that had been levelled at him when he had refuted the allegations as to the pretended casting of his St. John. His enemies admitted that he was certainly a sculptor and innovator; he could no doubt model an isolated statue, but did he know how to make a group? They thought it doubtful, or at any rate they pretended to; Rodin's answer was the "Burghers of Calais".

It was a fine subject; for an artist enamoured as he was at that time of stalwart frames, simple movements, and a somewhat curious way of looking at human beings, these six burghers were fine models, doubly interesting by the moral beauty and emotion of their countenances, and by the physical signs of starvation caused by the famine of the siege. The subject was further ennobled by the idea of patriotism and devotion to one's country which Michelet and other historians have dated from this episode and from Eustace of St. Pierre. In any case these six stout-hearted burghers were very faithful citizens.

Both Mirbeau and Geffroy have admirably analysed the complex psychology of this group;—old men, proud and resigned; men of action, indignant at the halter round their necks and the near prospect of cruel death; younger men, touched with regret for the existence they are about to leave, and with pity for their young lives so soon to be shattered. In the figures, especially in that of Eustace of St. Pierre and of the young man whose fine gesture of farewell to life is so celebrated. Rodin has put all the emotion with which the strong and simple art of the Gothic cathedrals and statues has inspired him. But it is in no wise an imitation. His Burghers are neither saints nor labourers; they are beings filled with the sense, the faith of the past. Rodin has given to these effigies of the grief and self-sacrifice which is common to all ages, the ardent and despairing soul of earlier days.

The influence of the Burghers of Calais has been enormous. In how many works both by Rodin's pupils and other artists, have we



PYGMALION ET GALATHÉE •  
 PYGMALION UND GALATHEE  
 PYGMALION AND GALATHEE



RÉVERIE

TRÄUMEREI

REVERIE



LA FAUNESSE

FAUNIN

FAUNESS



not seen it reproduced either in individual portions or in its general schemes of grouping? Soon after the production of the Burghers of Calais the monument to Claude Gelée or Claude Lorrain was put up at Nancy. Nancy had at that time the honour of being the residence of the great glass-maker Galé. And he with Roger Marx, who has the same birth-place, vigorously defended Rodin's work, which was violently attacked both at Paris and in the town for which it was destined. And yet how wonderfully spirited is the movement with which the chariot of Light dashes upwards from the base of the statue, under the feet of Claude, that lover of the sun, as he rises upwards to eternal glory, amid the whirl of the god's horses. The town is now proud of the homage paid to its great painter by our master-sculptor. But at the moment the protests were as many and as loud as at the appearance of the „Gate of Hell” and the “Balzac”.

□   □   □

#### THE GATE OF HELL. BALZAC'S SECOND MANNER.

The Gate of Hell is not yet finished. Ordered twenty years ago, its general scheme has been blocked out and many of its details completed. At the Exhibition of 1900 this majestic mass, six metres in height, showed what a prodigious effort its final execution would mean. The sculptor's idea is to give us in this monumental work an impression of the vortex of human passions and spiritual creation. Attracted by his readings towards Dante he was inspired with the desire of interpreting the saddest of his cantos. But, as we may suppose, one whole side of the Dantesque conception—his theology and his view of eternal punishment—has disappeared in Rodin. Instead we see the tornado of the passions and their incarnations whirling past the eyes of the watchful and meditative spectators and gyrating with ever increasing rapidity through the abyss that lies between birth and death.

Without pre-judging the final appearance of the completed work, we may say that it represents three melancholy and contemplative figures, who seem doomed to be seized in their turn by the whirl of forms; at their feet Hell rushes past with its inhabitants. Francesca

and Paolo pass by on the hard rock. In the lower panels are sorrowful and weeping faces and round them turns a circle of female satyrs and centaurs, the troop of the great god Pan, the life of joy that ignores all pain. Thus the contrast is established between passion and nature, and the balance held between serenity and suffering.

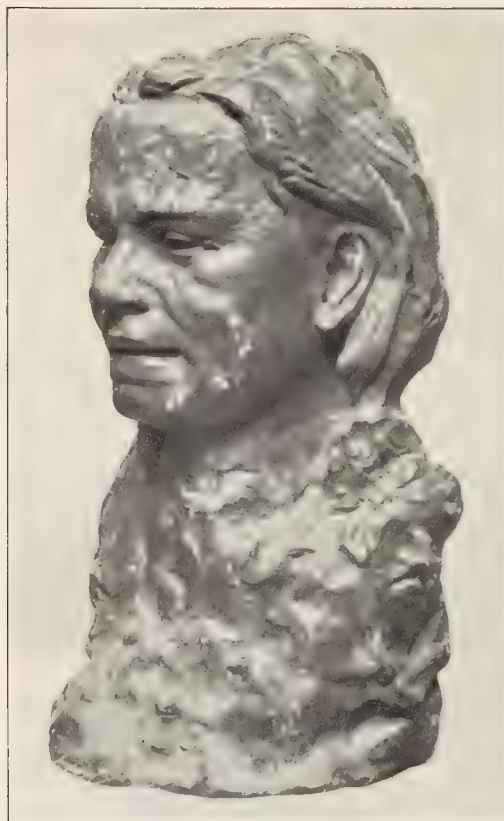
The statue of Balzac gave rise to the most violent and furious attack that Rodin has ever called forth. True it is that the artist had changed manner. The greater number of people who had been converted to Rodin either through conviction or affectation were completely nonplussed, and a lively controversy arose regarding this statue which indeed affected by its treatment many of the most thrilling problems that concern modern sculpture. How should a great contemporary be represented—in other words how should a monument to a man of our own times be treated?

□   □

Chateaubriand and Lamartine dresses in tall boots and romantic cloaks did not satisfy their contemporaries any more than Gambetta in a frock-coat did his. On the other hand can one get out of the difficulty by dropping the statue altogether and by putting an allegorical figure on the pedestal, while the great man to be represented, the pretext and reason of the monument is fobbed off with a medallion on the base? It is certain that a man in a frock-coat is not a sculptural object. But if you suppress him you admit the weakness of our age, you recognise that we are incapable of putting a portrait statue of a great man in a public place. Rodin endeavoured to overcome these difficulties—but they were numerous. In the first place he had to imagine his Balzac. The authentic portraits of him are poor and uncharacteristic and give only a few general lines and features, to eke out this scanty material by visiting Balzac's native country Touraine, in order to study his countrymen's cast of countenance. Here he found men of the same type as Balzac, and completed the imperfect knowledge he had gained from descriptions and portraits, which are authentic, though unilluminated by the light of intelligence. After thus combining the Touraine or generic



LA MARIÉE DE VILLAGE  
DIE DORF-BRAUT \*\*\*\*  
THE VILLAGE BRIDE \*\*



LA PLEUREUSE \*\*\*\*\*  
DIE WEINENDE \*\*\*\*\*  
HIRED LAMENTATION WOMAN



ETUDE DE NU

AKT-STUDIE

STUDY OF THE NUDE



ETUDE DE NU

AKT-STUDIE

STUDY OF THE NUDE





LA PARQUE ET L'ADOLESCENTE \*\*\*\*\*  
 PARZE UND JUNGBRAUT \*\*\*\*\*  
 GODDESS OF FATE WITH YOUTHFUL GIRL.



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type with the contemporary portraits and endowing the results with intelligence, he was able by the means of a gradual series of busts to arrive at what is in all probability the real Balzac. His next step was to make a nude Balzac, in order to find the pose. Though the statue he made of Hugo for the Panthéon is nude, he finally settled not to make a nude Balzac.

What was his idea? Probably this. Hugo was a poet and his mind freed itself to the utmost from the trammels of time and space. He is the man of the "Contemplations". A thinker, he listens to the murmur of dead centuries and writes the *Légende des Siècles*; he speaks with the tongues of heroes, prophets and gods; he is a poet above all things; even in his novels his first desire is to escape reality. His is a great universal voice, almost elemental in its lyricism. His language is always figured; he is always comparing himself and comparing others; always trying to induce his contemporaries to live, by the help of his intelligence, the life that is common to all ages, the simple life of love and liberty. Hugo measures mankind by an heroic standard. Heroic himself, he can call forth heroes. He sees Orpheus and the nymphs go by. Rodin has made of him the Poet in the abstract—nude and listening to the eternal voices—the hero, unclothed, the essential Poet, the lyre-bearer.

It would have been difficult to treat Balzac in the same manner. Balzac is a modernist, the founder of modernism; as a novelist he is so desperately anxious to make his characters seem life-like, or rather living, that he invents the registers of their birth, and marriages, and all the minutest details of their careers. One is not surprised that two Balzaciens have published a biographical and geographical dictionary of the *Comédie Humaine* in which Rastignac, Vautrin, Rubempré, de Trailles, etc. are treated as historical personages.

Balzac is one of the masters of realistic literature; every one of his heroes and even of his minor characters is described minutely in his habits, dress, politics, aims and tendencies. His works could only be fitly illustrated by the combined forces of Daumier and Monnier together with those of Jollanot and Deveria. (Doré may do well enough for the whimsical and fantastic *Contes drôlatiques*, a thing à part.) The stuff of

his imagination was always life and not dream. Seraphita Seraphitus would be the single exception (if it were not for the Swedenborgian novels) and even that is only partly a vision. There is nothing Greek in Balzac, and if his genius touches mankind in general, it touches it in a circumstantial and contemporaneous and actual manner.

It is as impossible to imagine a nude Balzac in a public place, as a nude Stendhal. On the other hand Balzac in a frock coat is out of question. Such a thing may have been done, but it must have been to the detriment of art. He was a little, short, stout man. Some means had to be found.

Rodin chose to portray him in his working garb. The idea of representing labourers in their working clothes was in the air and Rodin cleverly transposed it to a labourer in the fields of thought. Moreover, while keeping the physiognomic truth, he neglected the real stature of the man, and made not a portrait, but a synthesis of Balzac. The great novelist is set before us in all his power. Intent on his train of thought, he has interrupted the manual labour of writing, to pace up and down the study, and has been caught while still in the very rhythm of his walk, as he stands for a moment with head and shoulders thrown back, and eyes gazing abstractedly in front of him as they contemplate the inward idea shaping itself in his mind. The conception seems simple enough but it was ill understood. For this great rude block of plaster has none of the prettinesses people ask for in sculpture. And moreover it is in Rodin's second manner. How he arrived at this manner he has himself explained in words noted by Mr. Mauclair.

"It did not come to me all at once. I ventured very carefully. At first I was afraid and then, gradually as, face to face with nature, I grew to understand her better and to cast aside prejudice more frankly for her love, I became bolder; I made an attempt; I was not ill-pleased. It seemed to me better. . . . The study of the Antique also encouraged me and the sculpture of the middle-ages which is as fine as that of the Greeks. I have done all I could to conform in spirit to the great masters. At first I did clever things, spirited things . . . but I felt that it wasn't quite that. . . . It has been very difficult . . . Art is not imitation





LES NEREIDES (DU MONUMENT VICTOR HUGO) • • • • •  
 DIE NEREIDEN (VOM DENKMAL VICTOR HUGOS) • • • • •  
 THE NEREIDS (FROM THE MONUMENT OF VICTOR HUGO)



LA NATURE

DIE NATUR

NATURE



LA SPHYNOE



L'EMPRISE

DIE UMARMUNG

THE EMBRACE

and only fools think we can create. There remains only the interpretation of nature. Every one must interpret in the sense he likes best. I have at last defined mine." After his first attempts (The St. John, the Age of Brass, the Fair Helmet-maker) Rodin set to work, slowly and obstinately, to give the muscular system in all its detail, to work all round his figures and to model successively all their planes. He sought a drawing which should represent "motion in an atmosphere that furnishes the values". And finally he arrived at the conception that to give the spirit of a thing, only the essential should be formulated. He gave up a certain angularity which he had affected at first and adopted a richer and more supple modelling, with larger surfaces—almost in the style of painting, of synthetic painting, that is. He thus attained the plenitude of art and workmanship and discovered his own manner of transcribing life and generalising gesture. The result was an increase of happier productiveness.

"The lives of bronze and marble that Rodin has sown in the course of his career are already a people of wild and natural creatures", says the painter Duhem, and he goes on: "their bodies are an expression of the soul made living. . . . Now a second people, children of the first are born . . . the dying Alcestis, whose sublime pathos wrings the heart and brings tears to the eyes, or the Burghers of Calais, rigid in their poignant resignation or bitter regret. It is always the sacrifice to unity which makes the emotion in his work supreme and overwhelming. . . . Admirable transitions from reality to the intangible."

Rodin arrives at the purest intellectuality and finest ideology by means of an accurate measurement of volume and an exact disposition of planes. He does not require immobility from his models; on the contrary, the model is allowed perfect freedom of motion and the artist makes a rapid drawing of him (hence the large number of his drawings) swifter and more summary than those of the Japanese. A curve, a slight watercolour-wash, and he gets an instantaneous impression of beauty and life. These drawings form a library of human gesture. Sometimes Rodin actually sends away his model and works from memory like the Japanese. With the help of this dictionary of forms which has been stored up by his brain, he is able to embody his synthetic vision.



"Thanks to his daily observation of nature", says Mr. Duhem, "Rodin is able to model movement according to his personal conception; he often sacrifices a useless detail in order to accentuate the important gesture, often exaggerates a muscle that gives rise to the principal movement, in order to intensify the action and make an impalpable feeling tangible. The essence of his technique is intensity."

Rodin therefore set to work to represent Balzac at the moment when he was most himself. The ample loose-flowing monks-robe seemed a costume that might belong to any period, and besides it was Balzac's habit to wear such a garment and Rodin might have argued that the real Balzac was not the man who rushed through Paris seeking the wherewithal to satisfy his creditors, but rather the man as he wrote and as he meditated at home. His statue of Balzac has no accessories. Perhaps he meant by this to signify that Balzac's brain was so vast a mirror and reflected such innumerable and multifarious images, that it was impossible to symbolize it by a few outward signs.

This was not the case with Hugo, a man of simpler views, whose art, though manifold, is directed into a few main channels. Hugo's style is dominated by one principal habit, the use of antithesis. The whole of his work consists of the juxtaposition of the grotesque and the terrible, light and shade, strength and tenderness. Antithesis is his formula and stands for his conception of the contrast that rules the affairs of men, and consequently their mode of expression. Rodin may have reasoned this out, for he is a well read man, or he may simply have been guided by his intuition, when he placed two genii, one on each side of Hugo, the great muse of history and chastiment, and the idyllic muse, or, if you will, strength and tenderness. Another project for a statue shows Hugo going towards the sea and being welcomed by Nereids. These will be admirable monuments when completed and together with the marvellous bust in the Musée Galliera will give posterity a lasting idea of the real Hugo.

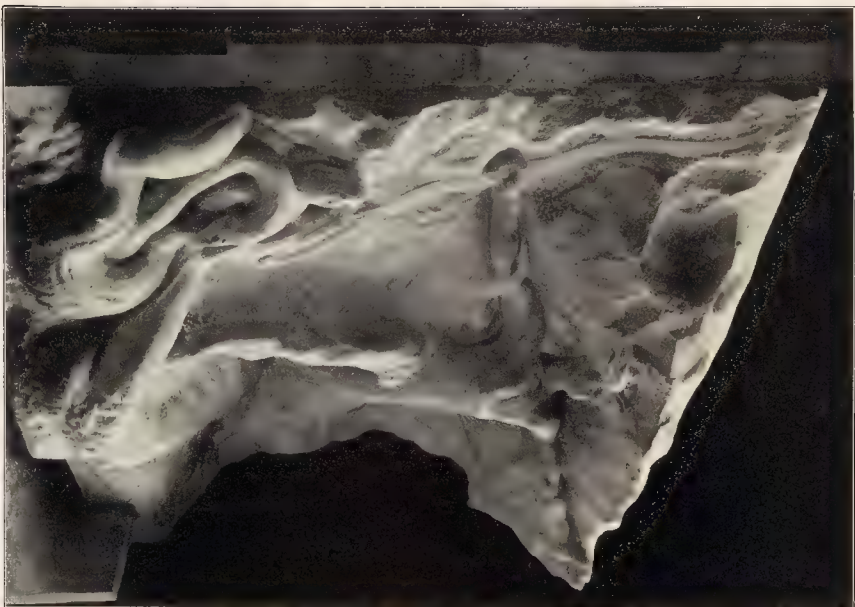
In Rodin's gallery at the Val Fleury the works of his second manner are rapidly accumulating—projects, sketches, casts, marbles—and are material proofs of the excellence of his method. The admirably lighted



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APOLLON ET L'HYDRE

APOLLO UND DIE HYDRA

APOLLO AND THE HYDRA



VICTOR HUGO (PROFIL)



gallery is peopled with a dream world. The artist can wander among the creations of his mind and look upon the beings he has called into life.

One of the forces of nature seems to have piled together a world full of forms. The sensation of being in the presence of a natural force which one experiences at the first view of this white blossoming of life, increases after longer examination. One feels that one walks among matter illumined by the vital spark. Even the studies and works done to a small scale represent innumerable schemes for monuments which are completely thought out and only awaiting an opportunity to be transformed into colossal masses, ready for erection in public places. One of these is the project for a "Monument to Labour". It is about a metre high; the base is formed by a sort of crypt or hollowed column round which a spiral staircase winds upwards to the platform of a statue. In front of the crypt are two statues of Night and Day, the general lines and attitudes of which have been found. The interior of the crypt will be adorned with bronze bas-reliefs, illustrating the life of the minor and diver. Above is the column; the outer staircase, entwining it like the handsome floreagated ribbon, symbolises the climbing of mankind towards infinity and the uninterrupted evolution of progress. Above all, the two great figures of strength and prayer—the benisons of labour,—crown and glorify the whole.

It is of slight importance that the bas-reliefs illustrating the worker's life, and the signs of the Zodiac symbolising the labours of each season, are not executed. The idea of the whole is nature and the great tower is ready to be set up whenever Paris or any other great city should desire to see this sculptured hymn to human Labour take visible form, the inmost beauty of the work, its moving and inspiring principle have been found long since.

And many another new work is here! On one side is an "Eve", modest and trembling as she is borne through the air by a flying Muse to the enraptured sculptor; on the other an "Eros" snatching aside Beauty's veil and revealing the frail delicacy of her woman's form in contrast to his own proud and heroic young figure. Here a great swan's

vast and snowy wing overshadows a young woman who seems drowsily listening to the music of Earth rising from the soil,—“Dreaming”, this figure is called and is the project for a memorial monument. Here is the marble bust of a victorious “Minerva”, helmeted, severe and beautiful; here sundry small groups of lovers embracing. In the glass-cases are sketches of busts, studies of the accentuation of a pose or detail which shall better show off some feminine grace and sometimes we see the ornamental synthesis.

Rodin has extracted from a human countenance, set in juxtaposition with an absolutely accurate representation of the same model. For Rodin, in order to arrive at the essential beauty and truth of a face, works by a means of a series of studies and has each successive stage of his work cast.

He begins by obstinately endeavouring to discover the most expressive characteristics, and then when he has fully equipped himself with a series of documents, he sets to work to transcribe definitively the essential and fundamental truth inherent in his model. For in Rodin’s judgment there goes to the making of truth all that is symbolic and suggestive in a model, all that is revealed to the intuitive eye of an adept in the knowledge of human form and human mind.

□   □  
□

Rodin often walks through his gallery, lifting the cloths that cover yesterday’s work, examining projects, that he has long cherished, pondering over others he has momentarily put on one side. Even when he is showing round visitors and friends, he is reflecting and working. With a rapid stroke of his pencil he sets a word or sign or mark on a cast, which will serve him when he next goes to work. He is as patient as he is dogged. He is for ever retouching and recommencing. He notes an idea that is still in embryo, either by putting it down on paper or by rapidly and feverishly modelling it in clay. These little sculptured jotlings, the inspiration of the moment, he sets on one side and has thus made himself a notebook, as it were, of his artistic ideas. These rapid gleanings from life, this system of superimposed notations,



LA PENSÉE

DER GEDANKE

THOUGHT





L'ÉTERNELLE IDOLE

DAS UNVERGÄGLICHE IDOL

EVER LASTING IDOL



L'ÂME DU SCULPTEUR (ÉTUDE)  
DES BILDHAUERS SEELE .....  
THE SCULPTOR'S SOUL .....



LE SONGE

DER TRAUM

THE DREAM



AVANT LE BAIN

VOR DEM BAD

BEFORE BATHING



FRÈRE ET SŒUR      GESCHWISTER      BROTHER AND SISTER



LA NATURE      DIE NATUR      NATURE



ETUDE DE MAIN      HAND-STUDIE      STUDY OF THE HAND



ETUDE DE MAIN      HAND-STUDIE      STUDY OF THE HAND



and persistent, though interrupted, efforts towards realising the bringing out of each facet of his general idea, this patient pursuit of the only possible arrangement which shall combine decorative truth with truth of movement, are the means by which he is able to turn a fine sketch into a masterpiece, and a truthful study into a transfiguration—as for instance the vigorous and realistic bust of Hugo, which has been transmuted into the lofty and heroic figure of the Luxembourg, and Panthéon monuments, surrounded with Muses, Glories and Oceanids.

Rodin makes no speeches, but he is not unwilling to talk about his work. In a few short, decided sentences murmured in a low voice, he throws light on his own art, and on his conception of art in general. His critical taste appreciates those periods, flowering terms of art, when more harmonious conditions of life were favourable to individual inspiration and wide spread creative movements. He loves Greek and Gothic and Renaissance art. He regrets the patient labour of the artists of the Middle-ages, their long apprenticeships under one master, the perfect craftsmanship of the old artists and artisans. He admires in the architecture of the XVII<sup>th</sup> century, in such a building for instance as the castle of Chenonceaux, the admirable disposition of the parts, the whole-hearted devotion of the subordinate workers, to the master-builder, their sacrifice of the selfish desire to shine, their conscientious and thorough workmanship.

At times, one feels, in accordance with his theory about the finest and richest periods of art, that Rodin regrets an age that would have allowed him, like the stone-cutters of old, to train under his discipline a band of diligent pupils, good workmen, obedient and laborious artists, whom he would have employed to block out the monuments he planned. A hundred arms would scarce suffice to fix in marble and bronze all the dreams that he has confided to clay alone. With such helpers, how many cities might he not have peopled with his great decorations.

At times, not without a touch of coquetry, he attacks the desire for originality which at the present day seems to be the mark of an excessive development of individuality, or at any rate of a hankering after originality, at any cost. But we must distinguish. Rodin's masterly

superiority, whether it be due to his thorough and accurate study of structure in his early days, or to his having in later years modified the art of sculpture by giving it light and character and associating it with the great impressionist movement—Rodin's superiority is only absolute because he was a reformer. Sculpture is no longer the same art that it was before his time. He has dowered it with certain slenderness of form, certain fever heats, a lyricism, a synthesis, which had been long unknown. Houdon and Clodion had grace without power; Puget had power only. Rodin has grace and power and inventive fancy as well; he enters the lists with Theocritus and Dante; he has discovered a new fashion of curving his lines and an impassioned and feverish manner of blocking out his work; he looks at matter in a different way from his predecessors, and has a totally new method of treating marble. I am willing to admit that he has points in common with the Japanese and with the artists of the Renaissance and Antiquity. But he is not like them. He had a hard struggle before he was able to establish himself a proof of an originality so deep rooted and so complete, that it is almost absurd to draw attention to it. Thus we see that his words have need of explanation and that when he inveighs against originality he is simply attacking deliberate affectation and mannerism. Originality consists merely in a strict observance of nature! But even so, it is a quality of extreme rareness.

Rodin does not only place antiques in his house. In his dining-room, which is severely elegant, with its pale green walls, amidst the flowers on the centre of the table at which the master loves to see his friends, is a fine Greek torso. On the wall, however, is a large unframed picture filled with studies of nymphs, painted by Falguières, the graceful sculptor, once a rival and now a friend, who has been led in his latter years by Rodin's influence to return to the study of nature and fulfil his early promise. He has also a few Carrières, an admirable portrait of himself by Legros; a fine portrait by Van Gogh of the old artist's colourman Tanguy, whom Cézanne and Guillaumin used generally to pay with pictures, and who carried on an honest little picture dealing business. One feels that Rodin sympathises with other views of art than his own.



JEUX DE NYMPHE ET FAUNE ••  
 SPIELENDER FAUN MIT NYMPHE  
 PLAYING FAUN AND NYMPH ••



LES SAISONS ••••  
 DIE JAHRESZEITEN  
 THE SEASONS ••••





STATUE DE BALZAC

BALZACS STANDBILD

STATUE OF BALZAC

He is not so much eclectic as large-minded and admirably informed as to the artistic and literary life of his time. The essence of his being, however, is strength, strength that is both useful and normal, and the chief impression that remains with us is one of the continuity, logic and calm that have gone to the begetting of so vast and sane a work. When his "Thinker" first appeared some people were astonished that he should have given him an athlete's form. They were wrong. Rodin with his passionate love of balance, must inevitably imagine thought as something serene and strong. The type of man he evokes in his lyrical creations is a man of neither mystic nor nervous temperament, nor is it a faun, but a man of well poised strength, a man whose clear mind and calm brain reflects the image of the world, as still waters reflect a mighty tree; and this is the reason he has given his Thinker such an aspect of calm and adamantine strength.

Rodin's latest works, or studies for works, are a series of drawings rapidly done from King Sisovath's female dancers. He has captured the old-fashioned grace and regal bearing of these Orientals, whose ancient dances contain symbols of the oldest of liturgies. The charming prettiness of the little dancers has been transformed by Rodin's pencil to a thing of antique beauty, and has taken on the majesty of the great art of all time whose noblest living incarnation he is.

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